

**HOW NOT TO HESITATE IN STREET PHOTOGRAPHY (AND
LIFE)**

HOW NOT TO HESITATE IN STREET PHOTOGRAPHY AND LIFE

Hesitation is the death of us.

In life, we are all given good “decisive moments”—but it is up to us, whether to seize those moments or not.

I think it ultimately comes down to courage, self-confidence, and lack of hesitation.

How to have less regret in Street photography and life

Of course, in wisdom — prudence (having common sense) and good judgement is key. Yet, in today’s world —we are all too stuck in our brains. We think too much, and act too little.

I was thinking about street photography: the biggest regrets I have is when I hesitate, and fail to click the shutter, and therefore I miss what I perceive to be a potentially good street photograph.

In real life also —we often are presented good moments, yet fear and hesitation get in the way.

What do we really fear?

Three Practical fears in street photography

Well, in Street photography, you can fear physical attacks from your subject, mental attacks from your subject, or a feeling of guilt.

1. Fear of physical attack: fear of a physical confrontation, perhaps getting punched in the face or something like that.

2. Fear of mental attack: fear of someone cursing at you, or trying to make you feel bad or guilty.
3. Fear of guilt: fear that you're going to feel bad, sneaky, or some sort of sense of shame.

Let's break these down:

1. Fear of physical attack

Do you really fear physical attack? I think if we learn to take a punch, perhaps we will be less afraid. I think perhaps as an exercise –we should take a boxing class.

2. Fear of mental attack

Do we fear mental attack? Sticks and stones can break my bones –but words can never hurt me. No but seriously if someone tries to curse you out and calls you a “fucking creep” or “fucking pervert”—how would you feel or respond? Are you a creep or a pervert? If not, why would the words of the other upset you?

3. Fear of guilt/shame

Question to ask yourself,

“Do I feel comfortable having my photograph taken?”

If not, why not?

Do you feel guilt or a sense of shame from photographing your subject? If so – why?

Guilt or shame comes from the false notion that we're doing something wrong. But, you're not doing anything wrong as a street photographer. You're doing a good thing as a street photographer – documenting beauty in the world, acting as a visual historian, and providing value in society.

In praise of program mode in street photography

Another idea: often we hesitate in street photography because we are uncertain or unfamiliar with our technical settings. The ultimate street photographer is like a zen samurai warrior – who becomes one with his camera, and the point when the photos shoot themselves.

For example, let's say you see a good street photo moment. You might hesitate because you're not sure what the best settings may be.

My solution:

Set it and forget it.

Shoot street photography in P (program) mode, ISO 1600, center point autofocus, and just shoot.

This means, **all you have to do as a photographer is to frame the scene, and click the shutter.**

I've been doing this a lot on my RICOH GR II, and I've hesitated far less, because I don't have to think about my camera settings.

Don't think

Another idea in Street photography: don't think.

I think when we're shooting, the conscious mind, the thinking mind is the enemy.

We should use our brains and think when we're reviewing our photos, but not when we're shooting.

When you're out shooting, don't think. Shoot, with no hesitation and no resistance. Shoot like water ; flow.

How to hesitate less when you're shooting street photography

But how do you turn off your brain when you're shooting?

Some ideas:

1. Don't try to make "good" photos. Just shoot whatever interests you. Judge your photos later, when you get home.
2. Try to shoot to music: Experiment – try to shoot with headphones in your ears, with music that you can dance to. Music can be good or bad -don't get run over by cars. Listen to music that gets you in the groove, I personally like jazz, hip hop, and classical. You can try techno music, electronic music, or perhaps even heavy metal.
3. Shoot with a friend: talk and shoot, you will feel less self conscious. I find that my students in my workshops feel more comfortable shooting with a partner, because you feel strength and certainty in numbers.

How to hesitate less in life

Some ideas for real life, to hesitate less in life:

1. Realize there's no way with 100% certainty whether your decisions will be right or wrong. Rather, just lower your maximum downside. For example, if you're investing, don't invest more than 10% of your income in one investment, therefore you know your maximum downside is only losing 10% of your wealth. My theory is our fears come from unknown risk –if we are able to fully become conscious of our maximum risk or downside, we would be less fearful of making decisions.
 2. Be flexible: try to add more flexibility or optionality to your decisions, so you can adjust them afterwards. For example, **try not to make irreversible decisions.**
 3. Follow your gut: with decision making, I find less regret when I just follow my gut and intuition.
-

Be bold

So friend, let's try to seek to shoot more uninhibited in Street photography, and to life life more uninhibited.

The world awaits you. Be bold, be brave, and don't hesitate.

BE STRONG, ERIC

[CONQUER YOUR FEARS AND MEET NEW PEERS >](#)